Allowance of the foregoing claims 50-54 is earnestly solicited.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page(s) is/are captioned "Version with markings to show changes made".

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the specification:

At, page 17, line 14, please insert the following paragraph:

– As further seen in Figures 2 and 4-9, but most typically in Figure 8, the flexible links 44 and the curved end segments 73 are arranged in such a fashion so that the stent does not flare upon arterial traversal or expansion. First, links 44 are placed so that a line connecting their proximal and distal ends lie transverse to the longitudinal axis of the stent. Second, the outermost curved segments 41 of the links 44 (that is, where these segments are attached to a curved segment 63, 73 respectively) are joined to these segments at a point where the tangent of the curved end segment is at an acute angle to the longitudinal axis of the stent when taken in the direction of the flexible link 44. The reduced flaring upon expansion created by this structure allows the operator to place the stent by direct stenting, without pre-dilatation of an arterial stenosis. This arrangement may be achieved on each flexible link of the stent along its length. –

In the Claims:

-- -- 50. (New) A stent in the form of a generally tubular structure having a longitudinal axis, the stent comprising:

a plurality of circumferential sets of strut members that extend in a generally circumferential, ring-like pattern around the stent's longitudinal axis with each circumferential set of strut members comprising a plurality of curved end struts, the curved end struts being substantially curved across their entire length;

a plurality of flexible links with each flexible link being fixedly attached to two adjacent circumferential sets of strut members and each flexible link having a proximal end and a distal end with a line drawn through the proximal and distal ends of the flexible link lying transverse to the stent's longitudinal axis, each flexible link having at least four generally longitudinal extending curved segments that each have a proximal end and a distal end with a line joining the proximal end and distal end of each curved segment being generally parallel to the stent's longitudinal axis, the curved segments being connected together in series by three generally circumferentially extending segments of approximately equal length; and

the stent being further characterized by having the outermost curved segment of each flexible link connected to each curved end strut at a point thereon, the tangent to the curved end segment at which point being at an acute angle with respect to the stent's longitudinal axis as taken in the direction of the curved end strut that is opposite the curved end strut onto which the outermost curved end segment is attached.

51. (New) The stent of claim 50 wherein the width of the each flexible link is less than the width of each curved end strut.

52 (New) The stent of claim 50 wherein the ratio of thickness to width of each flexible link is greater than 1.0.

53. (New) The stent of claim 50 wherein the link is formed from stainless steel.

54. (New) The stent of claim 50 wherein the link is formed in the shape of a letter "N". - -